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ABSTRACT

Four papers on an ethnographic study of Christian Brothers College (CBC) in Australia, a Catholic college, are presented. In "Christian Brothers College: A View from Overseas," Louis M. Smith discusses research methods, the religious ethos, faculty heterogeneity, diversity in classroom organization, the organizational context of the college, and the position and role of the headmaster. In "Continuity and Change in the Brothers' Educational Mission," Lawrence Angus notes that the influence of lay teachers and aging membership of the Christian Brothers is changing CBC. In "Cultural Reproduction of the Labour Market: Work-Experience at CBC," Peter E. Watkins suggests that at CBC a common cultural function was indicated where family, religion, school, and work experience cultural traits merged and coalesced. Reproduction occurred through the continual movement of students into complex organizational relationships. In "Reproduction and Contestation: Class, Religion, Gender and Control at Christian Brothers College," Richard J. Bates notes that control over administration, discipline, and curriculum was contested and a process of transformation was hastened by the increasing lay proportion of the faculty body. (SW)

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Deakin University

School of Education

Schools as Negotiated Realities Project

Research Monograph No. 1

CONTINUITY & CHANGE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION : AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE

Richard Bates, Louis Smith

Lawrence Angus, Peter Watkins

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An initial report of a case study produced by the Schools as Negotiated Realities Project, Deakin University, with the Assistance of the Australian Research Grants Scheme, November 1982.

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Introduction: Background and Methodological Considerations

The study of C.B.C., Newburyport, is the joint undertaking of a Deakin University Research Team comprising Richard Bates and Peter Watkins of Deakin University, Lou Smith of Washington University, St. Louis, and Lawrie Angus, a teacher at C.B.C. The study forms part of an ongoing research project: Schools as Negotiated Realities sponsored by Deakin University and the Australian Research Grants Scheme. The C.B.C. project was initiated by Richard Bates and grew out of discussions between Bates and Angus, who, as a part-time postgraduate student, had been collecting ethnographic data at C.B.C. for over two years under Bates' supervision. A number of aspects of C.B.C. - including its history and status as an independent Catholic school serving a provincial community, its administration and ownership by members of a religious order whose representation on the teaching staff is declining, the history and mission of the Christian Brothers - indicated that it would be an interesting site for investigation.

Richard Bates broached the idea of an intensive ethnographic study of C.B.C., in the first instance, with the school's headmaster, "Brother Cameron", whose initial response, which was maintained throughout the entire project, was one of immense interest, openness and willingness to assist. Brother Cameron secured the necessary approval for the study from his religious superiors and arranged for Bates to speak to C.B.C.'s personnel at a monthly general staff meeting. From the first mention to staff of the possibility of the project, Lawrie Angus was continuously on campus during each school day and thus readily accessible to staff members wishing to talk about the project - particularly those who felt some unease about the prospect of outside "experts" coming into the school and observing and interviewing them.

In a series of discussions with Brother Cameron, Bates and Angus negotiated a "Statement of Procedures" to be presented to teachers prior to the next general staff meeting. At that meeting, Bates outlined the project in some detail, explaining that the focus of the research would be upon teachers and administrators at C.B.C., and discussed questions raised by staff members. In the event, no staff member expressed objections to the study proceeding or to the general principle that the research team should be free to observe and record general, everyday behaviour in various school settings. A handful of teachers, however, expressed a reluctance to be interviewed.

Final clearance for the project was given at a third meeting of staff when most members indicated support for the study and a willingness to participate in it. Although Brother Cameron was of the opinion that the uniqueness of the C.B.C. project would be enhanced by using the actual names of the school and its members, the decision was taken to code names and place names to secure the anonymity of participants and of the institution. As a further protection for the individuals involved, it was agreed that transcripts of interviews would be returned to interviewees for correction and approval. All of the thirty-plus staff members who were approached for interviews gave them - some on several occasions and of several hours duration - and only one retracted any comments made on tape.

Richard Bates had earlier invited Lou Smith to join him on a Deakin University research project and arranged that the most intensive phase of data collection at C.B.C. should coincide with Smith's visit to Australia. Once all approvals for the conduct of the study had been secured, Peter Watkins also joined the research team which was now a unique combination of four researchers with specific responsibilities in the construction of the ethnography.

The Researchers

Richard Bates, the initiator of the C.B.C. project, is Associate Professor of Educational Administration at Deakin University. Prior to the C.B.C. study, he had organised a large scale ethnography of a community secondary school (Bates et al., 1981) which provided a degree of empirical validation for an emerging cultural theory, grounded in critical social science, of schools as organisations. The C.B.C. study would allow further interrogation and development of the theory. Although the other researchers, with the exception of Smith whose theoretical background is within the liberal-humanist tradition, share with Bates a theoretical orientation with somewhat common roots in neo-Marxism, the new sociology of education and critical theory, the diversity of religious and theoretical perspectives of the team members added a flavour to the research over and above the intriguing nature of the research site itself (see Bates, 1982, for a discussion of this point).

Lou Smith, Professor of Education at Washington University, brought to the project immense experience in the field of ethnography. His own practice of ethnographic research and contribution to its methodology establish him as one of the foremost educational ethnographers. His particular interest in the C.B.C. study was the opportunity that it afforded him to investigate private religious education in the somewhat foreign culture of Australian society.

Lawrie Angus has taught English and Social Studies at C.B.C. for the past six years and his own secondary education was at a Christian Brothers' school. He has thus accumulated an intimate knowledge of Catholic education, the Christian Brothers' Order, and of C.B.C.

Peter Watkins, fomerly a teacher in state secondary schools, is a lecturer in Educational Administration at Deakin University. At the time of the project he was just completing his thesis for the doctorate of Philosophy. His research, an ethnography of work experience students and their employers, derived from theories of cultural production and reproduction and focussed upon the part played by work experience programmes in preparing young people for the transition from school to the workforce. This background provided him with valuable experience and expertise with which to investigate the crucial linkages between C.B.C. and the Newburyport community.

The combined resources of the research team, then provided a formidable combination of theoretical underpinning, practical research expertise, and inside knowledge of the research site.

Methodology

a) The Ethnographic Focus

Catholic education in Australia is at present characterised by multiple and somewhat contested goals (Praetz, 1974, 1982; Leavy, 1980), involves personnel from a variety of backgrounds (CECV, 1978), has undergone considerable change in recent years, especially since the second Vatican Council (Gill, 1972; Britt, 1975; Selleck, 1978; Praetz, 1980), and is subject to various pressures for still further change (Praetz, 1982). C.B.C., Newburyport, has not been chosen as a representative or typical Catholic school but simply as a particular site in which, nevertheless, all of the above issues are being played out in a way that contributes to its cultural uniqueness.

The Deakin research team believes, with Ogbu, that:

> An adequate ethnography of schooling cannot be confined to studying events in school classrooms, the home, or playground. One must also study relevant society and historical forces (Ogbu, 1981: 15).

But one must also do the best one can with limited resources. Therefore, while conscious of issues such as, for example, the public funding of private religious schools and the bureaucratisation of Catholic education, these remained tangential to the main thrust of the project which was to construct a defensible account, informed by various underlying theoretical premises, of the dynamics of C.B.C. and of the values, assumptions and beliefs, negotiations and contradictions which make up its operation and organisation. Wherever possible, the historical derivatives of and influences upon any set of beliefs - that is to say, the received history which sometimes amounts to folklore by which individuals explain or justify their actions - were examined by following up the perspectives of informants.

A further limitation to the C.B.C. project was that not even all of those directly associated with the school, much less those who are part of its wider social and cultural linkages, could be investigated. The decision was made to focus attention upon the administrators and staff of C.B.C. some of whom were "shadowed" for varying periods of time, most of whom took part in lengthy open-ended interviews, and all of whom were observed in a variety of settings and took part in informal conversations. Less comprehensive data from pupils was gathered by classroom observation and from discussions with groups of students. Limited data from parents derived from conversations and from observation of activities organised by the school's parent associations. Just being present in Newburyport for even a limited period of time gave the researchers some insight into general community attitudes towards C.B.C., the principal educator of Catholic boys in the region.

Document analysis provided a further source of information. The voluminous tide of documents, made accessible without reservation by Brother Cameron, included his own correspondence, memos, internal reports, school records, daily bulletins, year books, information compiled for the central Catholic Education Office, the Christian Brothers' journal and historical and religious documents including the "Constitution and Statutes" of the Order.

Limited though the data from sources other than C.B.C. staff and the documents were, they were essential in providing important triangulation (Smith, 1979; Denzin, 1970) to enable some measure of validation of staff perspectives. In this context, the variety of ethnographic techniques employed in the research allowed further triangulation as the team members monitored the degree of convergence of data elicited by various means.

The research was, in a sense, a combination of long term participant observation and "blitzkrieg" ethnography - with attempts being made to avoid the "mutations" that Rist (1980) associates with the latter. Certainly, the C.B.C. study is a departure from the traditional model of a lone ethnographer at a single site for an extended time - but both Bates and Smith have previously been associated with team ethnographies (Bates et al., 1981; Smith et al., 1981). Such an approach capitalises upon the multiple perspectives and varied experience and knowledge which is beyond the scope of an isolated researcher. The time constraint, however, was a serious one which forced the narowed focus that was mentioned above.

The shortest continuous time on site, six weeks only, was spent by Lou Smith. During that time, however, he lived in Newburyport and was a full time researcher at C.B.C. - conducting interviews, shadowing the principal around

C.B.C. and to meetings in the capital city as well as to a school camp and on business forays within the Newburyport district, observing teachers in class, roaming the playgound, hanging around the staff coffee/lunch/meeting room and talking and listening to teachers, attending religious activities, and joining in (usually with his wife, Marilyn) staff social functions and activities of the C.B.C. parent associations. He thus rapidly accumulated many hours on site. This is intensive fieldwork in the true sense of the term and cannot be susteined for a long period. Even so, Smith, whose informal criterion for determining when to withdraw from a site is that "when you get so that each day you are around you are not really learning anything new - then you know that you have just about got the subject covered", felt, near the end of his six weeks at C.B.C. "My problem is that everyday I am here I am learning - there is always something that someone shoves in my face and says, 'you would be interested in this'." (The comment, incidentally, indicates the extent of the co-operation that the researchers received from C.B.C. personnel).

Lawrie Angus had been a resident of Newburyport for almost four years and was in his sixth year as a teacher at C.B.C. when Lou Smith arrived at the site. For two and a half years he had been collecting ethnographic data at the school - a genuine participant as observer (Lutz & Iaanaccone, 1969). His membership of the research team was particularly useful because of his accumulated intimate knowledge of C.B.C. and established relationships with teachers and pupils. These enabled him to ease the induction of the other team members into the site and to combat initial staff and pupil fears that the researchers would be co-opted by the headmaster. Angus and Smith worked together closely for much of Smith's time in Newburyport, with Angus often playing "Doc" to Smith's "Whyte" (Whyte, 1955). His access to all levels of school membership provided opportunities for Angus to set up conversations with

groups of teachers and pupils for Smith to record. In a series of long taped conversations, Smith and Angus discussed the history of C.B.C. and of Catholic education in Australia, and issues that were developing as concerns for C.B.C. administrators, staff, parents and pupils. These discussions proved useful for conceptualising emerging grounded theories (Glaser & Straus, 1967; Smith 1976) and relating them to the substantive theoretical perspectives which informed the research. While Smith based himself in the staff cofee/lunch room, Angus spent part of each day in one of the two staff work rooms. This, of course, did not overcome some inevitable sampling of C.B.C. personnel since, different teachers frequent different areas during their non-teaching time.

Due to a combination of unavoidable circumstances, Richard Bates was unable to spend as much time on site as he had anticipated. During the most intensive phase of data collection, the six weeks which Smith spent at C.B.C., Bates travelled to Newburyport for an everage of three days a week on campus. Prior to that time he had secured some funding for the project and had negotiated access to C.B.C. with Brother Cameron and his staff. This involved a series of telephone calls and meetings with Brother Cameron and attendance at meetings of C.B.C. staff. Like Bates, Peter Watkins' time on site was limited. He, too, averaged three-days per week in Newburyport during Smith's stay. His previous experience as a classroom teacher, year 12 co-ordinator, school timetabler and acting principal in public schools gave him an easy entry into life at C.B.C.

b) Team Organisation

After a succession of long distance discussions amongst the researchers, visits to C.B.C., occasional meetings between Bates and Angus when Angus travelled to Deakin from Newburyport, and more frequent discussions between

Bates and Watkins due to their location at Deakin, the first full team meeting was held at a restaurant in Newburyport on the day of Smith's arrival there. During the next six weeks, team meetings were held at least bi-weekly and, after Lou Smith's return to the United States, the other three members held joint sessions at which data and tentative interpretations were reviewed.

At the early meetings, a division of labour, at least in regard to interview schedules, was negotiated according to the backgrounds and interests of the researchers. Lou Smith, for instance, whose preferred technique is to hang around and wait for things to happen, conducted fewer tape-recorded interviews than the others. He was, however, intrigued from the first meeting by Brother Cameron and arranged a series of tape-recorded interviews and informal conversations with him as well as shadowing him for several days. He interviewed several other teachers with whom he had fortuitously struck up informal conversations in the staff coffee/lunch room and whom he sensed would be useful informants.

In arranging interview schedules, it was decided that Lawrie Angus, because of his long-term connections with the Christian Brothers, should concentrate upon the religious community at C.B.C. He tape-recorded lengthy interviews with all of the brothers at C.B.C. except for Brother Cameron, who had been "allocated" to Lou Smith. Of course, the "division of labour" was not absolute and Angus often spoke with Brother Cameron just as the other members spoke with all of the other brothers and lay teachers. In most cases, however, particular staff members were assigned to individual esearchers for tape-recorded interviews - the exceptions being several key informants who were interviewed on separate occasions by two or three researchers.

Richard Bates' interest in the complex challenge to the traditional values represented by C.B.C. led him, in negotiating interviews, to concentrate upon the growing presence of women teachers in an almost all-male environment, the large number of former pupils of C.B.C. who are now teachers there, and a long serving lay teacher as well as teachers new to the school. Peter Watkins' previous research involving careers education, work experience programmes and transition education influenced him to investigate similar areas at C.B.C. and to interview the teachers concerned with them. His background as a geography teacher and timetabler placed him in good stead to interview other staff members.

During subsequent bi-weekly team meetings, all materials generated by each researcher - field notes, documents, transcripts of interviews (prepared with amazing rapidity by an untiring research assistant) - were shared with the other members. The ensuing lengthy, and often lively, analysis of the data and review of theoretical positions, as the team worked towards a composite and intelligible account of the dynamics of C.B.C., forced all members to adopt a critical perspective as theoretical bases were interrogated and the direction of the research was continually modified. Thus, triangulation was tightened not only by accumulating data from various sources and by a variety of means, but also by negotiating the accounts of the several researchers.

An innovation of Smith's, which proved useful for other members, was the compilation of "Sunday summaries", the product of reflecting each week-end upon the previous week's research. The resultant clarification of each researcher's own understanding of C.B.C. fostered the sharing at team meetings of ideas that were necessary in order to build group perspectives.

The extensive collaboration amongst team members has resulted in a set of papers, each of which contains data and ideas that are the joint product of Richard Bates, Lou Smith, Lawrie Angus and Peter Watkins. Nevertheless, individual authors take responsibility for specific perspectives taken in each paper.

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CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE: A VIEW FROM OVERSEAS

Louis M. Smith

Washington University, St. Louis

Methods and Procedures

Most of our more detailed methodological comments appear in the Appendix of our general report (Bates et al 1982). Here I mix a few of my general beliefs and procedures which focused some of the efforts.

Before arriving in Australia I developed a two page statement of what I thought we would be about. This is consistent with our earlier projects and practices and Malinowski's (1922) oft cited concept of foreshadowed problems. It reflects the historian Hexters (1971) concept of "the other record". It provides a gyroscopic function when one is overwhelmed with the complexity of particulars while in the middle of the project, i.e. "What am I doing here anyway?"

The total time allocated for the project was 6 weeks, a much too short an interval. In effect I was trying out an extension of a comment by Jacquie Hill (1977) and the CSSE project (Stake & Easley, 1977) - is it personally possible, can I do a short term ethnography?

The resources were broader than a personal effort; we had a unique combination of four people. Richard Bates had initiated the project, and brought a theoretical perspective from the new sociology, neo Marxism

and critical theory. Laurie Angus has taught social studies and English in the school; currently is half time on the school faculty. He was educated in a Brothers' School in South Australia. Peter Watkins has taught a number of years in a State Secondary School, been intensively involved in such administrative tasks as timetabling, and is married to a Catholic.

The major methods of generating data remained similar to ones we had used before:

Direct observations of ongoing events
Open ended interviews with participants
Document collection
Inside/outside relationship

Such an approach allows one to synthesize many of the major dichotomies in perspective within social science - historical vs contemporaneous, internal/phenomenological vs external/behavioural, structural vs processual, experience-near vs experience-distant concepts, focal vs contextual events.

"Sunday summaries" labels an activity which proved very helpful for me. Each week-end I'd ask myself what have I learned about C.B.C. this week. These seemed a blend of important stories, interpretive asides, and central conceptualizations. They provided guidance on what had been done and gave leads on what needed to be done. Research staff meetings each week kept building mutual understandings, kept fostering data sharing and idea trading.

It seems appropriate to comment that I spent a full period and sometimes two or more periods observing in classes of about 1/5th of the faculty, had intensive post interviews with most of these, conversations of

varied length with most of the rest of the faculty, and had brief introductions to a number of others at different times. The research team interviewed almost 2/3rd's of the faculty. I also spent nearly two full days "shadowing" the headmaster; one of these days was mostly internal to the school; the second was mostly external, in meetings with Headmasters of Catholic Independent Schools and with Headmasters and Headmistresses of Independent Schools throughout the State.

The variety of documents we had access to seemed like a tidal wave. In comments to several staff I indicated a strategy from home which we call "inundating visitors with paper". When used as a strategy, this has all kinds of functions and dysfunctions. This time we found ourselves swimming desperately to keep from drowning.

The "results" of our research come together in a final report. In most of our efforts we have accented the careful teiling of veridical vignettes, stories and narratives, items that tend to be less interpretive and about which considerable agreement among participants is possible. The actors should agree, "Yes, that's essentially what happened" or "Yes, that's what I said or he said". In addition, we have moved toward more generalizable meanings, ideas and interpretations. Sometimes these are reasonably close to the participants' world, and often in their own words; other times they are more distant and out of the world of the theorist - be he or she behaviourist, structural-functionalist, symbolic interactionist, or radical critic.

Images and Interpretations: the Religious Ethos

As a non-Catholic and only casual visitor to parochial schools in America, I was overwhelmed by the religious ambience of the school. The prayers at the beginning of most classes, the religious statues, pictures and symbols, and the formal religious classes seemed everywhere. The Brothers, their community, their participation in all parts of the curriculum and in all kinds of activities provided a presence throughout the school. Visits by local priests and priests from elsewhere in Australia and around the world extended that feeling of omnipresence.

The impact of this on the boys seems quite variable. On the negative side two clusters of observations are germane. At times the participation in activities such as the before class prayers seemed perfunctory and with little involvement and meaning. Second, some of the comments of the boys, and usually the older ones, in various informal conversations carried the flavor of "I go to mass because my mum makes me". On the positive side, the involvement of the primary boys in the Reconciliation experience, the close participation of the parents, and the preparation by these teachers seemed as vital and meaningful as any religious ceremony could be.

Images and Interpretations: Faculty Heterogenity

The single stereotype I brought with me pictured C.B.C. as an homogeneous faculty composed primarily of teaching Brothers. The reality accents a mix of homogoneity and heterogeneity - for example, most (but not all) of the faculty are Catholic. But only about 20% are Brothers. It is a Brothers' school, but in a fundamental sense it is not.

I was also surprised at the international flavor of the faculty which seems to bring major and important alternative perspectives on the nature of education. Again the group of old boys from C.B.C. and other Brothers' Schools bring a mix of attitudes to their current role of teachers. As lay teachers some hope to change and "improve" upon the education offered by Brothers' Schools in earlier years.

Diversity in Classroom Organization

A number of items require comment here, but time permits a mere introduction. First, I was struck by the diversity of pedagogical styles. While text books of multiple sorts were quite prevalent with their correlated assign/study/recite procedures, other forms appeared across subject areas and grade levels. Informal discussions (e.g. current events, religion), project methods (in social studies), laboratory experiments and demonstrations (in science) and problems (also in science) appeared. As the variation in those methods implies the sources of ideas and data came from texts, varied printed materials (literary critics' statements, other manuals and references etc.), student generated data (from personal experience, interviews and work experiences), and varied experiences of the teachers. This breadth seems an important part of the intellectual life of the school.

Class size was quite variable. Some classes as small as 7 or 8 in advanced courses. Others as large as 37 or 38 in the primary and early years of secondary (7's & 8's). Almost every Brother talked of earlier years and other schools where they taught groups of 80 or 90. Keep the youngsters "writing, writing, writing" was the technique voiced by one; corporal punishment was echoed by another. But that was of another era.

Discipline, in most classes, was no problem. "The kids are a piece of cake" were the words of one experienced staff member who had taught in a number of schools. Most teachers are well in charge, again with varied styles. The punitiveness sometimes alleged to be a part of Brothers' Schools was not here. The biggest problems lay with teachers new to this school and particularly those new to the profession. Beginning teachers here as elsewhere (and with every profession) have problems learning the mix of craft and professional skills required to sustain their activities.

The nature of knowledge taught and learned in the school seemed to have considerable variety also. In some classes it seemed quite technical. In a literature class the critics had these contrasting things to say about MacBeth or Hucklebury Finn. Or in science the formula for this electrical process or that chemical process is this and that. Or in P.E., football kicks are categorized in three ways (torpedo, drop-punt and drop-kick) and field hockey has several kinds of passes and stick movements. Problem skills, lab skills, sport skills are linked with such knowledges. In other classes, and across different subjects and grade levels, the knowledge seems more common sense and part of the folk lore of living in Australia (its climate, flora and fauna) in the Australian sport culture (tennis at Wimbledon and soccer in Madrid) and living as a Catholic (biblical stories and phrases "doubting Thomas"). And in some instances, a mix occurred of the technical with the quite personal as in human relations/sex education classes where discussion and talk included - love, affection, sperm. ova, fertilization, embryo's, uteruses, penises, erections, and wet dreams.

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Influence such as the nature and importance of HSC exams seems to be very important in the upper grades. The curriculum in some classes

seems to be almost isomorphic with the demands of HSC. Some staff seemed pleased with this, others feel constrained. Most staff see parents and students highly concerned and demanding careful preparation for the exams.

One of my summary impressions is that each teacher takes considerable personal and professional responsibility for deciding what and how he or she will teach. Many staff seem to like and prefer minimal guidelines. Others seem to want more common views of scope and sequence of curriculum. In recent years some efforts occurred in literature to put order into which novel or plays would be taught in which years. C.B.C.'s intellectual identity seems to have grown more like "Topsy" than by planned consensus building.

Christian Brothers College as an Organization

But teachers and classrooms reside in larger units and contexts. C.B.C. does have an organizational structure that presents a set of "givens", opportunities that are open and constraints that limit. This social reality is usually defined outside the give and take individual teachers have with their students. Some of our observations and conversations indicate that this organizational level is important generally in schooling and that C.B.C. has some interestingly different aspects from other schools we have studied. While the school has an identity, it, too, is part of several larger or broader contexts which provide a new level of "givens". These social realities, in turn are contested, negotiated, or enacted by another set of actors, one step further removed from the teacher and the pupils. Often a principal or headmaster "represents" his school in the discussions and debates which frequently accompany this

definition of the reality, the rules of the game, or the new givens. C.B.C. as a Catholic School, as a Christian Brothers' School, and as an Independent School has some fascinating aspects to it as a case study.

One obvious fact about C.B.C. is that it is not the only school in Newburyport. More than that, it has some special characteristics: it is a Catholic school; it is a Brothers' School; it is a boys' school; it is a primary school (Year 3 to Year 6) and a secondary school (Years 7 - 12).

C.B.C.'s place in primary education has several key elements. First, it is the only independent Catholic primary school. Newburyport has 12 parishes, each with a co-educational primary school. In a sense, from C.B.C.'s perspective, each of these schools is a feeder school to C.B.C. Parents may elect to send their youngsters at any grade or year level 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7. The main entry points are at Years 3 and 7, the latter being the traditional secondary school entrance time. Controversy exists over the C.B.C. Primary school, mostly because it removes some 35 boys in years 3 & 4 and 70 boys in Years 5 & 6 from the Parish Schools. An investigatory committee has been set up by the Catholic Education Office. Although the imbalance in boys and girls is the manifest reason, latently, part of the agenda is "the numbers" in Parish Schools. The numbers determine, in part, financial allocations from national and state governments. In addition, some people feel that the independent school upsets the intimate relationships among home, church, and primary school within the parish.

In addition Newburyport has a large number of state schools (comparable in most regards to American public schools). A quick survey

suggests there are 50 of them in the two education districts serving the community. In addition to the dozen Catholic schools there are fifteen private schools.

At this point in time (in this preliminary report) our data is not firm as to who goes to which schools. Such data are critical for a series of hypotheses on the general role of schooling in society and the specific role of C.B.C. in the city of Newburyport and in Australia more generally.

The Organizational Context of C.B.C.

One factor that quickly became obvious was the importance of other groups and systems which have a bearing on C.B.C. as an organization. C.B.C.'s structures and processes grow out of, are influenced by, and are dependent upon this context. Our most vivid data developed in a day spent with the Headmaster in two meetings:

1) a meeting of the headmasters of the Catholic Independent Schools in the state.

2) A combined meeting of the Headmasters and Headmistresses of all the Independent Schools in the state.

The issues under discussion clearly indicate the political activities and efforts of the groups to influence other groups that have some authority over Independent schools such as C.B.C. In the first meeting discussions related to influence in the Archbishop's office and policies regarding enrolment and termination of students and hiring and firing of teachers. At the present time the Headmasters have considerable power. Tenure

rules exist within the State schools but not in the Catholic Independent Schools. Moves are underway to rationalise many of the differences. Some Brothers see this as part of a larger bureaucratization of independent schools. At the second meeting the issues included a small item in the scheduling of HSC exams. The Chairman said, "We lost that one" to the Universities who wanted and got an earlier date in the term than the headmasters wanted. A larger issue concerned the multiple and conflicting messages from three different government departments concerning Asian students seeking places in Australian Independent Schools. Some schools were being deluged with applicants. This year alone some 6000 students from Kauala Lumpur and 2000 from Hong Kong were seeking places. Even more critical was an issue in the background on the policies of the major political parties on the funding or termination of funding of the independent schools.

There are, therefore, multiple agencies and groups influencing the organizational structure of C.B.C. We cluster them into five groups: the larger Christian Brothers' Community, Multiple Unit of the Church, Multiple Unit of State and Federal Government, other Educational Groups and General community factors. The analysis of these intricate relationships is only begun.

The Position and Role of the Headmaster

A few short sentences capture with difficulty the Headmaster and his perspective. He reminds me of Superintendent George in one of our earlier studies. He sees himself as a realist. He's fiscally conservative, believes he's right and is proud of the stance and the benefits it has

brought to the school. From his point of view he tries to "conserve and preserve, but move ahead" and mediate among such influences as the Provincial, the parents and the staff. He links this with the Brothers' historical mission of improving, through education, the social and economic position of Catholic boys in Australian society. They need basic education in literacy and numeracy. They need simple social skills and attitudes in courtesy, politeness, promptness, obedience, and responsibility. They need experiences essential to their movement into various levels of the economic system of Newburyport specifically and Australia more generally. The business metaphor runs through his thinking about school organization and school purposes.

Educationally, he's concerned about the range of ability and interests in the population of boys who make up the school's enrollment. The large majority will move through three major channels - some to University, some into local white collar jobs in banks, offices, and shops and some into trades. The school curriculum must serve this range. HSC courses are offered even with small enrolments some years. New programs - transition class and careers - are supported which facilitate groups with other interests and abilities.

Administratively, he sees himself as a practical man of action. A doer, mover, and stirrer, a person who gets things done. A maker of trouble for those who prefer to sit on their back-sides. In my experience, conflict is often a consequence of such an orientation.

His plans for the school, in his eyes, have been conditioned by the situation at the school when he arrived three years ago. This sets the priorities for him. He feels he's well into the agenda. The deficit has

been erased. Roofs have been repaired. Buildings and grounds are under constant surveillance and the appearance of the school has improved from the minor litter on the grounds to the general maintenance of the classrooms, gardens and ovals. He works hard at this with staff directly involved. The solvency of the school means that plans to refurbish the old hall are underway. The Provincial has approved plans for the $200,000 task. A bank loan for $50,000 of the total had been secured. That seems a remarkable achievement in less than three years. Like most such achievements it has had its costs.

Approval for an additional stream of youngsters at Year 7 (Form 1) has been given. This meets the growing parental pressure for increased secondary enrolments. It lays the base for later building of a three storey addition for additional science rooms, for expanded library space, and for a common room for senior boys. The final phase of his plans called for a combination gymnasium/auditorium building, but that is some years away.

To be correlated with these next phases of building and enrolment were general initiatives in curriculum and instruction. In the eyes of some of the faculty, but not all, these problems are seen as much more serious and pressing, and ones that should have taken precedence over some of the building issues. For this group, concerns exist as to the new headmaster and whether he'll be a "curriculum" man and whether he'll be more responsive to the educational issues of the faculty. Little clarity exists in the minds of most of the faculty as to how the Provincial and his council of consultors makes such a decision. At this point we are back to our prior discussions of "context", "nested systems', and "givens" as social reality.

Some Theoretical Sketches

One of the most frustrating parts of such a short term case study as this one concerns the intellectual or theoretical agenda. Several large domains of current educational thought had been caught in such labels as cultural reproduction and deprivatization which were in the early research team discussions. Coming to some clarity on such ideas and how they aid in understanding issues in schooling had been a major hope of mine. Before leaving St. Louis, I began reading Wakefield's book on the English Public School and thinking through some of the items presented in Simon Raven's Alms for Oblivion, a ten novel series of the lives of upper middle and upperclass Englishmen who came of age after World War II. The public school experiences flowed throughout the ten books. At a "common sense level" this seemed like a place to begin unpacking the term "cultural reproduction". Later I would move on to the more recent technical accounts (eg. Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Giroux 1981). Then my hope was to try the ideas out on the kinds of data and stories we had developed at C.B.C. Then, if necessary, we could go back to C.B.C. for further data to clarify the actual matters still in dispute. Finally, the ideas could be integrated into our evolving general point of view.

A second set of theoretical issues germane to C.B.C. and education in Australia has been called "deprivatization" by Erickson and Nault (1980). I had been reading their work for other reasons and found in initial discussion with Richard Bates that federal and state funding of private independent schools, including Catholic schools begun in the last decade in Australia and is an important political/educational issue. C.B.C. seemed a place to continue thinking through the issues.

What should have also been obvious before, but I made no note of it in my prior notes, was the possibility of integrating the deprivatization issues with Etzioni's (1968) more general theory of organizations. He builds a typology of organizations around the categories of "normative", "remunerative" and "co-ercive' and he argues that these major structural differences have impact through all other aspects of the organization. Historically C.B.C. has been a normative organization, government monies seem to be making it a remunerative organization. In a sense our case study could become a beautiful instance for critizing, clarifying, and developing this set of ideas. Presumably also this could make a major contribution toward examining, if not synthesizing into traditional organizational literature, concepts such as cultural reproduction which we have already mentioned. Similarly, the movement of youngsters through the school and into jobs and the economic world, which is essentially a remuneration system, to stay with Etzioni, should illuminate other recent theoretical positions such as correspondence theory. All this is the kind of large intellectual agenda which is the forte of ethnographic case study research (Glaser & Strauss 1967). But that's an agenda for the future.

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Such references to the founder occur often in the interviews with the brothers. Yet some amongst them wonder whether the original mission of Edmund Rice is now being pursued as rigorously as it should be. They speculate about ways in which the founder's mission of assisting the needy through education could be more appropriately applied. Brother Sterling, indeed, wonders whether the current apostolate has diverged from the founder's intention in that "needy" boys should be a more conspicuous target of the Brothers' educational enterprise:

> "I would wonder. . .if Edmund Rice came to Melbourne, where would he go? . . .he went to the slums outside Waterford. What we ought to be doing is heading towards the housing commission estates".

This opinion does not indicate that Brother Sterling disapproves of the Brothers' work to date - merely that he sees a need for change now that one task has been completed.

Question: Brothers. . .seem to think that they have done a good job in the area of educating the working class Catholic and kind of raising the social standing of Catholics in the community. Would you agree with that?

Br. Sterling: Yes, but we have not taken the next move.

Question: Which is?

Br. Sterling: The next move is - having in a certain area lifted a certain class to a certain level - do we stay with that upper level or do we head to a place like Broadmeadows and do the same trick over again?

In the one cryptic comment, Brother Sterling sums up his view that the Brothers' mission has been diverted from what it once was and also indicates the nature of his own motivation to commit his life to a teaching vocation:

> ". . .I didn't enjoy teaching rich people - otherwise I would have joined the Jesuits".

Interestingly, Br. Sterling has another reason for preferring that the Brothers withdraw from many of their established schools like C.B.C. and concentrate their resources in areas of underprivilege. He, with most of his colleagues, feels that one reason for the massive decline in entrants to the order, to the point where the Novitiate is virtually empty, lies in the excessive materialism of middle class society. Products of the economically underprivileged suburbs of metropolis may, he believes, provide a richer harvest of vocations to ensure the continuation of the Brothers' work.

Of course, the lack of vocations to the Brothers since about 1960 and the many defections from the order since that time have created a crisis of personnel which is forcing a reappraisal of the role of the remaining brothers. It is not much of an oversimplification to suggest that the brothers at C.B.C. are split fairly evenly into two groups. One would prefer the Brothers to withdraw from many of their schools into a small number of schools staffed mainly by brothers. The other believes that substantial change within the brothers' order and their schools is essential if the Brothers are to preserve any mission whatsoever. Indications are that, in the broad scheme of things, the latter group is now in the ascendency within the order. Brother Dowsett is encouraged by the decision of the Council of a neighbouring Province (state) to allow a small team of brothers to conduct emergency social work in the depressed areas of the capital city. He foresees that such a postulate will be attractive to a number of younger brothers, including himself. The headmaster of C.B.C. Brother Cameron, takes pride in the missions that the Brothers have established outside Australia in Fiji and New Guinea, and foresees the possibility of the Christian Brothers "lifting the people in those countries the way we have done here". Brother Gil O'Hara takes heart from the appointment, in another Province, of a lay deputy principal for

one of the Brothers' prestigious schools and sees this as indicating an end to the Brothers maintaining minority control in their schools. Many of his colleagues agree with him that lay teachers, provided they are committed Catholics, provide the only hope for the continuation of their schools even though they will inevitably become very different places. Gil is annoyed by those brothers who will not accept the need for such change:

Question: How does [a majority of lay teachers] change what the Brothers will do?

Br. O'Hara: Some have accepted this fairly well and others have found it difficult to take. Those who find it very hard to take, I think, are very unrealistic in the times that we live - and I think they are also unrealistic looking back. . .They think of the "good old days", which really gets me up the wall because they never existed - and I can't see why they can't see they didn't exist. I know what they mean - but there were never any good old days. Good old days of teaching 72 kids all day!

Yet some brothers really do look back fondly to days of heavy work loads and huge classes. At least, then, they were teaching in schools that could be literally called "Brothers' schools":

Br. Bourke: I started teaching in 1932 and until. . .1961 I had not taught in any school in which there had been more than one lay teacher. That was from '31 to '61!

In those days each brother taught his own class for most of the school day and many received great satisfaction from the ongoing contact with pupils that, in spite of large classes and rigid discipline, such an arrangement facilitated:

Br. Graham: Those kids were [a brother's] family, and they are his job, they are his recreation, they are everything. And that is why, whether they like it or not, they are going to get taught!

For these brothers, and others, the traditional educational enterprise of the Christian Brothers was part of their golden era. They recall days of large classes, heavy workloads and extra-curricular duties with satisfaction. Those were days of certainty for the order, and of a determined unity of purpose. Strong discipline and sound Irish Catholic values were inculcated into generations of Australian Catholic boys as they were instructed for examination success and upward social mobility. But a crisis of numbers in the order, an influx of lay teachers and a changing world has shattered the certainty that once characterised the mission of the Christian Brothers.

C.B.C. Newburyport: A Brothers' School

The Christian Brothers have had a long association with the provincial city of Newburyport which dates back to the turn of the century. It was once the site of the Brothers' novitiate and they have operated a boys' home there since 1903. C.B.C. was founded in 1935 to provide a complete secondary education for Catholic boys of the city, some of whom had previously completed their secondary education at local non-Catholic schools or had attended metropolitan Catholic boarding schools. Like Brothers' schools everywhere at that time, C.B.C. quickly established a reputation for firm discipline and sound results in public examinations.

Cameron Pont, himself a Christian Brother for over twenty years, and now fifteen years a lay teacher at C.B.C., is pleased about aspects of the reputation C.B.C. has gained:

Question: [Catholic traditions at C.B.C.] go back a long way do they?

Cameron Pont: Yes. I think they would go back a very long way. I think that C.B.C. was established in 1935 and academic tradition has began to be established even in those first years and people were proud of the fact. . .The Newburyport [Catholic] community was keen to have Catholic people in situations in the town - in influential situations in the town.

According to Brother Bourke, who as a young religious was part of the founding of C.B.C., Newburyport Catholics have been extremely loyal to the school:

> "The Brothers have been in Newburyport for a long time and there are a tremendous number of old families, old Catholic families, and that is what they grew up as. And they went to the Brothers' school and that was the only school they ever thought of".

The image of C.B.C. that parents are perceived to support was established in those days when the school was staffed almost entirely by brothers. Although only twenty percent of the teaching staff are now brothers, C.B.C. is still considered to be a "Brothers' school". Brother Graham explains his understanding of that phrase:

> "I would understand [a Brothers' school], as in these days, as a school that is being run according to the traditions of the Christian Brothers. That school is being run by the brothers and by like-minded lay teachers - and that word "like-minded" is very significant... We have traditionally been regarded at our schools as being authoritarian. . .I would be a little disappointed if some people didn't regard our school system as authoritarian - because in my mind that would mean a lack of discipline".

The like-minded lay teachers whom Brother Graham would like to see maintain the traditions of C.B.C. might be in short supply. In fact, the data indicates that most of the lay teachers have, at best, an ambivalent view of the Brothers' traditions, especially those related to rigid physical

discipline and narrowly defined curriculum, and only partly share their once stable value system. Moreover, a shift from many of the traditional values on the part of a number of the brothers is indicated by the data. This shift has implications for the future of the Brothers' educational mission.

Some brothers also emphasise traditional elements of discipline, solid work, religious observances and examination success which contribute to C.B.C.'s image. The crucial element in this image, of course, is the presence of the brothers. As Brother Cameron explains:

> ". . .[The parents] want at least a brothers' presence. Whether it achieves what they think it achieves is yet another thing".

He also believes:

> "Parents would go up in arms if they lost the brothers.... Parents don't have very high ideas of lay teachers".

Whether or not the parents or Brother Cameron like it, however, the brothers' presence at C.B.C., having already declined substantially, will continue to decline in future years. What presence will remain is likely to be an aging one and this, too, will continue to alter the Brothers' image:

Brother Dowsett: . . .the image of the Christian Brother is someone who is relatively old and I thought they need somebody young here just to show them (pupils) that it is not all that situation - although obviously we are getting older and I think we would be one of the oldest communities.

The image projected by the Newburyport community causes much concern to Brother Dowsett. At thirty-three years of age, by far its youngest member, he is aware that many brothers, particularly of his age group, would be reluctant to join the aged C.B.C. community:

> "It has got a bit of a reputation. . .I think there would be a lot of brothers that wouldn't like to come here given the present community, or the community as it has been the last few years. A lot of them see it as a fairly static kind of place and not much room for initiative and that sort of thing".

Brother Ian Dowsett is one of the brothers who feels that their educational mission requires a reassessment of priorities:

> "I sort of see the tradition of the brothers to basically be able to provide some sort of help and support, particularly in education, for those who are needy.... I think our work in the school here, one of our fundamental concerns, has got to be those kids who are in some sort of special need".

This consideration is the basis of the call by some brothers at C.B.C. for a reassessment of financial priorities to allow for the establishment of an adequate remedial programme for secondary students with special intellectual needs.

Brother Bourke, Brother Graham and others resent somewhat that lay teachers are trained as subject specialists and that their majority numbers at schools like C.B.C. have necessitated a school organisation which precludes the traditional arrangement of each brother responsible for his own class. This is an area of concern for these brothers for several reasons. One is that they believe that standards of discipline have declined because teachers now do not spend enough time with each class to get to know them well and control them properly. Another is that they

believe that boys are no longer sufficiently exposed to "Brothers' influence". Understandably, brothers holding these attitudes tend to have minimal contact with lay teachers. Perhaps it is by coincidence that the group of brothers associated with these views are clustered together in the year 9 and 10 area of the school - a fact which some other brothers find disappointing and even embarrassing:

> Br. Sterling: I was so shocked and staggered at the lack of initiative around year 10 that I couldn't take it.
>
> Question: Is that the area most dominated by brothers. . .?
>
> Br. Sterling: That is why I jumped out - because I found that I was so frustrated. Perhaps this would be people who did not want to rock the boat - hence you do nothing.... And perhaps you might also find people that have got such a narrow outlook on things and they will not discuss things.

Without doubt, the influence of lay teachers and the decreased and aging membership of the Christian Brothers is gradually changing at C.B.C. and all Brothers' schools. The first lay teachers at C.B.C. were in the primary school, then several ex-brothers were recruited in the secondary school. Gradually more lay teachers were needed as the number of brothers dwindled and increased federal monies allowed reduction of class sizes. The lay teachers only partially share the value system which was formerly perpetuated in the Brothers' training institutions. The stability and predictability of the traditional Brothers' school which won the allegiance of an earlier generation of Newburyport Catholics has thus become characterised by a degree of uncertainty which is yet to be resolved.

CULTURAL REPRODUCTION & THE LABOUR MARKET: WORK-EXPERIENCE AT C.B.C.

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Introduction

While certain elements of Catholicism may seem to be in a state of flux one of the striking characteristics of C.B.C. is the strength and cohesiveness of the school and its clientele. There is an all but unanimous consensus that the function of the school is to maintain and reproduce a faithful Catholic presence in a hostile world. Thus there is a whole status culture to be defended consisting of cultural traits, dispositions and conventions. The reproduction of this culture by C.B.C. was seen as crucial to the struggle for status and prestige in the socio-cultural system of Newburyport. The complex interplay of individual, school, Catholic and work cultures within the city is the topic of this paper. The explanation of the interpretation of these cultures is undertaken in terms of the theoretical perspectives provided by Bourdieu (1977), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Collins (1977, 1979).

Cultural Dispositions and Work

In the Weberian sense the culture of status groups reflect the personal ties and common sense of being based on shared views of the world (Weber, 1968). In this respect this paper follows the example of Collins (1977, 1979) in using the terms status group and class as

interchangeable concepts. Each status group has individual cultural predilictions and these peculiar traits and dispositions allow the group to utilise scarce cultural resources.

Non cognitive skills, which these cultural traits largely form, have lately been seen to be significant in facilitating entry into the workforce. Recent studies of recruitment into the world of work have emphasised the importance of these cultural attributes (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, 1981; Clegg & Dunkerly, 1980; Jencks, 1979; Salaman, 1979; Watkins, 1980). For the entry into work organisations is a point where there is a crucial intersection between status group, school and labour market which mediates in the reproduction of that status group.

At C.B.C. the family and school values of discipline, self control and obedience find themselves in harmony with each other and with the demands of the local employers.

This compatibility of family, school and work culture is internalised by both teachers and students. Indeed, students who sometimes find the discipline hard to take rationalise that it will eventually give them an advantage in entering the job market. Brother Earnest, for example, suggested that the values of obedience and hard work were associated with the brothers schools. Hard work and discipline in turn were related to the socio-economic advantage which he saw Christian Brothers' schools as conferring upon their clients. This feeling was also supported by Jim Karn, the transition co-ordinator, who argued that while youth unemployment in Newburyport was running at 25% only two or three students from last years exit group at C.B.C. had not got jobs.

The cultural traits of discipline and obedience stressed in Catholic families and schools were thought to be major factors in C.B.C. students' successful entry into the labour market. As several personnel officers had told Jim on visits during work-experience:

> "They are prepared to take our kids because they believe our kids are conditioned to a little bit of discipline; they are used to uniform; they are used to getting their hair cut; all these fairly bloody superficial reasons if you like, if you really want to look at them. But our kids are getting jobs like that in preference to perhaps kids at the tech. So the skills that the kids at the techs. have got from form one don't seem relevant any more according to Fords or Alcoa".

Salaman (1979), in a study of the recruitment procedures of Ford points out that the selectors are looking for candidates who show an ability to internalise the values and attitudes the company stresses. Particularly they seek recruits who show a quality of self-control and compatability with organisation policy and culture. Thus the Ford managers studied by Salaman stress:

> "the importance of the candidate's knowledge of and sympathy with, the values and beliefs current within the organisation, and which lie behind organisational events and decisions. Their scrutiny of candidates is largely a search for appropriate attitudes and self conception" (Salaman, 1979: 193).

Thus the local attitude is closely in tune with overseas experience. For instance, with the inflation of academic credentials (Collins, 1979) it would appear that employers are increasingly relying on non-cognitive credentials to allow them to screen perspective employees and to choose recruits whose values and dispositions are compatible to their own. Consequently in Victoria educational entry requirements for

apprenticeship are being scrapped as many employers saw the requirements as irrelevant (Age, 11/6/82: 14). In this respect the students of C.B.C. seem to have an advantage over other students in Newburyport by having a cultural background which is compatible to the requirements of employers. But while they may avoid unemployment, the choices for work experience would seem to indicate that many will end up with jobs similar to their fathers.

Work-experience in Victoria and C.B.C.

Cultural reproduction is not a static process but evolves historically through the dialectic interplay between the internal culture of the status group and the external culture of society. In this section, then, the historical development of work-experience in Victoria will be discussed as the socio-historical context for the introduction of work experience at C.B.C.

In Victoria in 1970 there were nine schools engaging in work-experience programmes of some kind. However by 1974, 84 schools in Victoria had implemented work-experience programmes (Cole, 1979: 33). In 1974, the Education (Work-Experience) Act was passed legalising and formalising the programmes. Such official encouragement, coupled with increasingly poor economic and employment opportunities, brought about a leap in schools participating in the scheme. By 1976 the numbers of schools engaging in work-experience programmes had increased to 240. This further increased by 1979 when 524 schools engaged in work-experience during the school year. Over 80% of the schools were state run schools; less than 20% were private schools (Advise, June 1980: 3).

The students' remuneration for the period of work-experience can range from nothing for a governmental or local service organisation to fifty dollars or more a week. Private employees must pay a minimum wage of $3 per day. This is mainly to satisfy the requirements for Workers' Compensation and a Workers' Compensation form has to be completed for each student and signed by the principal. To satisfy Workers' Compensation requirements when working for a service organisation the students agree to donate any payment back to the organisation.

The rationale behind the implementation of work-experience schemes has had diverse ideological backgrounds. Firstly during periods of high and persistent youth unemployment such schemes are seen by politicians, parents and employers as likely correctors of the apparent mismatch between education and work. Secondly, for radical educators work-experience was initially seen as a form of praxis; of bringing education and productive labor into close harmony (Freire, 1978). Thirdly, work-experience appeals to those members of society who see such schemes as a means not only to socialise the young to the workplace but also to inculcate the dominant ideology of the private enterprise system into the students (Marland, 1974).

At C.B.C. work-experience has only been implemented very recently. As Jim Karn put it:

> "Work-experience was introduced in 1980. It came in just as an extra programme for the commerce area. The commerce area adopted it and tried to get the kids out".

The commerce teachers felt that many students were unaware of the 'real' world of business. This had come about because many of the staff at C.B.C. were "either brothers, ex-brothers or ex-priests" who knew little of the demands and complexity of the 'normal' industrial world. Jim's aim was:

> "primarily to expose the kids to the work environment and to, as I see it anyway, what we are supposed to be preparing for. If you like, just what (work) was about.
>
> My initial basic aim was simply to expose them and get them out of the school situation and make them say get up at 7.30 and make them turn up everyday just simply (to) expose them to any environment whatever".

In this approach to the students' education Jim felt that they should be thrust even into the most alienated and dehumanised situations to show them what the 'real' world is like. For:

> "they simply don't know what the factory floor involves.... There is simply the dehumanising or the noise or whatever really must have had a tremendous effect on them and only two when they came back said they would go for it. Now that was my idea of that, is that most of those kids would not work on the assembly line anyway, they would be in diferent areas. But I really like to shock kids or just get them to realise what it is really about".

The initial numbers of students going out on work-experience was small. In 1981 twenty five students went into the work environment for two weeks of the second term. However, in 1982 this had quickly expanded to the entire year 11 group of 115 students. The change was facilitated by the arrival at the school of an 'Old boy' Bruce Smith, who had been involved in work-experience at a state high school in the Latrobe Valley since 1975. He had found that in the "Valley" it was seen as an important recruiting device as:

> "certain employers would try 3 or 4 kids during the year and at the end of the year they would make a decision on who they would employ. It also....saved them time and money in interviewing people".

Bruce's aims for C.B.C. were much the same as they had in the "Valley":

> "to get the students aware of the work situation, the getting up early, the responding to bosses, doing tasks, showing initiative. Secondly as a source of employment basically....I always felt (as a student at C.B.C.) that a lot of the stuff we were taught, was irrelevant because the type of kids that are coming aren't necessarily from the academic background. (On the forms returned) the average (parent's) occupation was in the trades business and the trade working class. (Consequently) when the kids sat down and filled out their preferences (for work-experience) of the 115 that went out there were 61 of them with trade orientated ambitions".

In the attitude towards the remuneration that the students received from their work-experience Bruce took the hard line of the 'real' world. In some schools slightly radical work-experience coordinators take a more egalitarian approach to the money earned. They collect the money and redistribute it so that all students obtain an equal amount. Bruce had found that in the "Valley":

> "the tech. school did it where they recallocated it. (But) you would have to be an idiot kid to tell you got $80 or $100 bucks, wouldn't you. I would be keeping it. That is encouraging socialism where the harder some guy works and gets paid and he distributes it to some idiot who doesn't work well".

The aims of work-experience reflect the liberal technocratic-meritocratic view of schooling and work (Bowles & Gintis, 1976: 23). These are mainly concerned with matching the attitudes and skills demanded in the workplace with those being produced by the school. The economic and political systems are taken as given and beyond the

range of educational questioning or actions. Inequality of power, status and wealth are taken as natural consequences reflecting the range of meritocratic skills in society. The job of work-experience is to allow the school-leavers to enter the workplace aware of the places they will occupy with "realistic" aspirations which reflect their educational attainment.

Some Thoughts on Cultural Reproduction and C.B.C.

Bourdieu perceived that with the development of capitalism, reproduction has become more dependent on cultural assets or cultural capital instead of inherited wealth. These cultural assets were also perceived as important by the Christian Brothers in their self appointed task of facilitating the entry of working class Catholics into the 'middle class' of Protestant society. Schools like C.B.C. therefore attempted to ensure that poor Catholics could overcome their lack of wealth and property by the acquisition of specific cultural assets.

In the recent development of capitalism, cultural assets which are in harmony with the operations of corporate enterprise have become increasingly important. This trend has become evident as the managerial personnel of firms increasingly come not from a controlling family but from a body of people endowed with the dispositions and characteristics compatible to the ideology of the firm (Bourdieu, Boltanski and Saint-Martin, 1973: 66).

However, Bourdieu argues, in the quest for credentials the school alone seems capable of providing the skills such as manipulation of

language, social dispositions and economic calculation demanded by the economic and symbolic markets. In this way the school functions as a means of symbolic domination. For:

> "even when it does not manage to provide the opportunity for appropriating the dominant culture, it can at least inculcate recognition of the legitimacy of this culture and of those who have the means of appropriating it. Symbolic domination accompanies and redoubles economic domination" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1978: 217).

Because the domination is of an arbitrary culture, it results in a socialisation which is inherently a symbolic form of violence. For the socialisation process does violence to the reality of the basic power structure. Thus there is a 'misrecognition' of the educational process by both the teachers and the students. Through this mystification of the true nature of the taught culture the resistance towards it is limited. Whilst those who inculcate the dominant culture "live out their thought and practice in the illusion of freedom and universality" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977: 40).

When looking at C.B.C. a major thrust of the schools program is directed at reinforcing and inculcating the dispositions of discipline, respect for authority and self-control. These are major tenets of both Irish Catholicism and capitalism. For as Cameron Pont, a senior member of C.B.C., put it, apart from a Catholic education the major factors:

> "that attracts people to C.B.C. (is that they think). I will send them to the brothers and they will straighten them out. . .They have been really brutal disciplinarians at times in their punishments. . .Even enlightened people believed that discipline in that form was a good thing".

The cultural ethos of discipline, obedience, and docility is seen as important by both the family and the school. This ethos of relatively

durable dispositions of modes of perception; of thinking self action is termed by Bourdieu the habitus. This provides students:

> "not so much with particular and particularised schemes of thought as with that general disposition which engenders particular schemes which may then be applied in different domains of thought and action" (1971: 184).

So in this way the cultural environment of C.B.C. differs from that which other classes or status group experience in schools in Newburyport. For as the environments for different classes differ so each class has a different habitus. As Di Maggio illustrates, the habitus brings about a "unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences statistically common to members of the same class" (1979: 1464). Thus through the workings of habitus the particular cultural practices of individuals from a particular status group or class appear "natural" and "normal" perhaps even "inevitable". But through this process there is little awareness of how these practices react and are modified by other practices or are themselves limited. Nevertheless there is a dialectic relationship between the individual, group and society. As Bourdieu puts it:

> "the habitus acquired in the family underlies the structuring of school experiences. . .and the habitus transformed by schooling, itself diversified, in turn underlies the structuring of all subsequent experiences (e.g. the reception and assimilation of the messages of the culture, industry or work experience), and so on, from restructuring to restructuring" (1977: 87).

The study of C.B.C. reflects the dynamic, dialectical interplay of culture. Through both the internal culture of the group and the external culture of society a dialectic evolves in which the individual is not only

created but also creates and contributes to the structures in which he/she exists. In a similar context Connell et al., argue:

> "the interactions among kids, parents and teachers are constantly being renegotiated and reconstructed, at times quite dramatically mutated in crises of the pupil's school life" (1982: 188).

Conclusion

At C.B.C. a common cultural function was indicated where family, religion, school and work-experience cultural traits merged and coalesced. This involved the traits of discipline, self control, respect for authority and obedience. The discipline of the school is legitimated and substantiated by the 'reality' of the business world that students come into contact with during work-experience. Students have to be 'punctual'; 'obey orders'; put their hands up to get permission to leave the assembly line, to go to the toilet'. In this way their daily life experiences influence, interact and renegotiate their life time patterns and expectations. For as Giddens argues the structural relations that perpetuate stability or precipitate change in a society are at the same time both the "medium and the outcome of the reproduction of social practices" (1979: 5). Thus reproduction occurs through the continual movement of students into complex organisational relationships and their interaction with them. For the individual in this way is engaged in an external-internal dialectic which reflects the interplay between his own cultural background, the culture of the school and workplace culture. Through this process it is the resultant cultural resources which the student acquires that play a vital role in the cultural reproduction process (Collins, 1979).

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REPRODUCTION AND CONTESTATION: CLASS, RELIGION, GENDER AND CONTROL AT CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE

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Introduction

For a decade now debate in the sociology of education has been dominated by arguments over the part played by education in the reproduction of social structures (Bowles & Gintis, 1976) and cultural difference (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Recently the early accounts of these reproductive processes have come under attack for being too deterministic (Bates, 1980) or failing to take note of the possibility or extent of contestation in schools (Giroux, 1980). Other accounts have been criticised for their naive optimism regarding the possibilities of intervention and transformation (Young & Whitty, 1977) and their underestimation of the dependence of educational transformations on concomitant economic and social transformations (Halsey et al, 1980). Most of these accounts of the processes of reproduction or transformation of social and cultural structures have been articulated at a macro-level, focussing on society-wide changes or processes. One of the problems of such analysis has been to relate such large scale explanations to the smaller scale explanations that both locate and illuminate the experience of particular communities and their schools. Such attempts as have been made display vividly the dangers of imposing pre-formed theoretical explanations on somewhat reluctant data (Sharp & Green, 1975) and of extrapolating from possibly unrepresentative data to large scale explanations of social process (Willis, 1977).

These reservations by no means condemn the works to which they refer. Rather they point to the substantial difficulties facing theorists and researchers interested in fundamental questions of social reproduction and transformation. These difficulties are both theoretical and empirical. The theoretical issues are largely those of relating macro to micro events and explanations, and of embracing rather than excluding the normative, evaluative elements of explanation, interpretation and action. The empirical issues are largely those of deciding what kinds of evidence count in attempting to deal with such theoretical problems; of whether large scale survey analysis excludes the thick description needed for adequate explanation or whether the abundant detail yielded by ethnographic techniques is bought at too high a cost in terms of generalisation. Each of these issues is spoken to in our attempt to construct a team ethnography of Christian Brothers College.

Theoretically, however, the issues of reproduction and contestation are spoken to by the historical/social characteristics of the school. For instance the school, along with most Christian Brothers schools has, historically, had a distinctive (working) class location. But rather than reproducing the working class culture of its clients the aim has been to transform the cultural identity of its pupils to establish a catholic middle class. Thus, as far as the wider social structure is concerned, elements of contestation and transformation are present and overshadow the elements of cultural reproduction.

The instruments of such transformation have, traditionally, however, been located within a school culture dominated by gender (an exclusively male staff and student population) religion (an explicitly conservative catholic theology and order) and control (a strict discipline emphasising

conformity and obedience). In these internal respects the cultural history of the Brothers Schools has been, until recently, one of reproduction rather than transformation.

Since the establishment of C.B.C. in 1935 a number of both internal and external factors have influenced the balance and outcomes of the attempts at reproduction, contestation and transformation. In particular these centre around four themes: those of class, religion, gender and control.

Class and C.B.C.

The explicit background to the establishment of C.B.C., as well as of other catholic secondary schools was, as Brother Graham recalls 'to enable Catholics to move into positions of influence', positions from which they were largely debarred in the early decades of the twentieth century in Australia by the almost exclusively Protestant nature of secondary educaton. The towns catholic community therefore welcomed the establishment of C.B.C. as Cameron Pont points out:

> In those first years people were proud (of the school's establishment). The community was keen to have catholic people in influential situations in the town. One of the ways they could do that of course, was by education.

The result of this emphasis on the class relocation of catholics into the middle class was, of course, a determinedly academic emphasis. Cameron Pont again suggests 'the whole school has been geared towards academic achievement'.

The success of C.B.C. on a local scale can be measured by the penetration of part pupils into the higher echelons of management and

professions in the town. As one staff member put it, many current school learners get jobs because of old boys who 'are 38 or 40, just vising to the top in their jobs as executives; others in are in their 50's now so. . .they just look after the old school tie'. The existence of such a network of contacts in banks and insurance companies in the town was also observed by Lou Smith during his 'downtown' visits with the principal. The penetration of the local business community by C.B.C. old boys is exemplified by the current mayor of the town who wears his previous membership of C.B.C. publically and proudly.

One of the problems facing C.B.C. is in fact a product of its very success, for, in creating a middle class catholic population in the local community it has assisted in the transfer of that earlier generation's children into the prestigious protestant schools. These schools, having abandoned their exclusion of catholics, now enrol, we are informed, some 10-15% of their students from the local catholic community. The result for C.B.C. is that '10 or 12 years ago the people who came to this school were. . .fairly comfortable financially. They were solicitors and doctors. Now that population has changed (and) we are having the plumber and the plasterer, the carpenter and the craftsman. . .who form the bulk of the population of the school'. It might be said, therefore, that the school now caters for a fairly stable group of lower middle class families, having lost the upper, professional groups to the nationally oriented, prestigious protestant schools.

At the same time C.B.C. appears to have drawn up the ladder as far as access by some groups within the local community are concerned. For instance, many of the academically less able are screened out through the use of the Test of Learning Aptitude (A.C.E.R.). It also appears that the majority of the post-war European (rather than Anglo) catholic immigrant population is also screened out through a zoning restriction with the result

that 'there is a much higher percentage of European children going to Vianney than there would be here'.

As far as the class location of C.B.C. is concerned, therefore, it appears that the early commitment to contestation and transformation of the class location of the catholic community has been, at least in part, successful and that the radical aspect of this school's mission has been itself transformed into a conservative, reproductive mission centred on the lower, middle class, anglo, catholic community. Such a transformation leads some of the brothers to ask whether 'what we ought to be doing is heading towards the housing commission estates'.

Religion at C.B.C.

If the class location of C.B.C. was altered from one of contestation and transformation within the wider community to one of reproduction then the converse seems to apply to the internal reproduction of a religious culture. To be sure, the consensus is that 'parents send their boys here because they want them to have a good catholic education'. But what constitutes a good catholic education in the modern, post Vatican II world is a matter of debate. The reproduction of old style religion through catechism based rote-learning and drill in ritual responses backed up by threats of retribution ("Fear, fear in the sense that you have to do this, or you must do this, or else".) appears to have given way to a degree of ambiguity and uncertainty. This is exhibited in two particular ways. Firstly, despite the obvious and distinctive (to a non-catholic) symbols and rituals that permeate the school there seems to be little that can be readily identified as a focal point of the religious life of the school. As one lay teacher suggested, echoing the reports of several others:

> There really isn't much sign of it really. The chapel is used by a few boys at lunch time. They might go up and pay a visit. Every teacher is supposed to say a prayer at the start of the period but I don't know if that happens all the time. . .Other than that there is a statue or similar in every room (but) I don't think religion plays a very important part in the school although there is the underlying theme that that is what we are here for and that this is the difference between this school and a normal high school.

This is a matter of concern for some of the staff. 'We have tried for years to say that the chapel ought to be the focal point of the school and if people are going to pray. . .They ought to come to the chapel... There is nothing organised in the senior school where they come together as a community'.

Rather than the religious life being focussed on the chapel and reproduced through the observances of the churches year it seems that religion is diffused into the classroom and in particular, the religious education classes. Here, there also seems to be a degree of ambiguity. For instance the traditional form of religious education 'learning definitions from books, catechism and that' has been displaced by 'more of a discussion type approach. . .more on the decent human side of it'. This discussion approach is explained in that religious education 'is a really difficult subject to teach. You can't realiy teach it. You can't... state an objective and then say at the end of this lesson these children will have grasped this concept'. The alteration in the syllabus from the catechism to a more social-issues based course has its pedagogical problems:

> with the catechism and whatever, it was pretty straight forward. . .and now I know, from a teaching point of view it is a lot harder with all the vague issues that now come up.

If the alteration from a catechism-based religious education to a social-issues based curriculum has produced an ambiguity of content and pedagogy, there is also conflict over the quantities timetable. That is, on the one hand 'If the school sets itself up to be a church school, then its number one priority should be teaching that religion.... Now matric results are damn important but. . .if an extra period is to be taken its always 5th period - which happens to be the religion period. This is a little cock-eyed view of things'. On the other hand as a lay teacher suggested 'From what the kids have said and from what some of the other teachers have said, a lot of the R.E. that is being taught in the senior school has no relevance to the boys. Especially in H.S.C. a lot of them resent the fact that they have 5 or 6 periods a week in R.E. and they would rather be doing something else (related to) H.S.C. which is the be all and end all'.

Finally, the place of religion in the school is threatened by the decreasing proportion of the staff who are Brothers, thus necessitating the employment of lay staff to teach religion, among whom much less consensus might be assumed than among members of the religious community of the Brothers.

In all then, the reproduction of a formal religious culture that was previously the concern of a wholly Christian Brothers staff has been transformed by the establishment of a more social-issues oriented syllabus and by the layicization of a large proportion of the staff. In such a situation the definition and practice of religious education is contested despite the expressed desire of parents for the reproduction of 'a good catholic education' among their children.

Gender in C.B.C.

If the increasing layicization of the staff has produced contestation and transformation in the religious education provided by the school, then, the increasing feminization of the staff is producing similar contestation and transformation of attitudes towards gender. For many of the female staff the attitudes of both male staff and boys create problems that initially focus on pedagogy and reveal a basically contradictory form of human relations to those traditionally employed. What struck one of the more experienced women on her arrival at C.B.C. was what she termed the conservatism of the school: 'I don't really enjoy teaching under this type of system. . .I don't get the rewards out of teaching that I have had before. . .for me it is like going back to teaching when I first started some 12 years ago. The structure is the problem. Even simple things. The desks are too big and heavy to move so they have to be in straight rows. . .I know the policy of the school is that they like order and tidiness and Brothers ask for people to line up but at that age kids should be able to go in and get on with what they are doing. . .That kind of strict discipline has an overeaction in children where, when they are given freedom, they don't know how to handle it and they over-react and become stupid'.

Several other women echo these sentiments. Another, younger women teacher: 'most of the teachers have been males. . .but just now there is this influx of females and (the boys) seem to be revolting against it'. Yet another younger woman teacher: 'you often get the impression, especially in religious classes, that these boys are in continuous revolt the whole time'. This tension between the female staff and boys in the senior school is observed by male teachers. Now there are a lot more women,

particularly young ones, which I don't think is all that good because... they get really attacked; not physically but mentally attacked by the boys and put under pressure'. One male staff member explains this phenomenon as follows:

> Women in C.B.C. suffer somewhat from an unfortunate attitude which I believe exists in the minds of many of the boys and puts them at a disadvantage because they are women. This in turn suggests something in the... formation of those attitudes, or the reinforcement of those attitudes by staff and perhaps the Brothers themselves or maybe by parental attitudes. (For instance) recently I gave the class a task of arguing why the male should be the head of the family. . .A lot of them took the line that women are not suited to the task because the notion of being head was one of issuing instructions or directions and. . . women are insufficiently capable of exerting their authority or do not have the requisite intelligence. Therefore the tasks they perform at home are the ones they are best suited to.

Certainly such an explanation is consistent with the parody of sexuality I observed in a free-form drama class where the "wife" was all bum and boobs and the husband dominant and authoritarian. It is also evident in one teacher's report of behaviour at a camp. 'We took the children down on the camp and on the first night one of the boys wanted to ring up his girlfriend. They made a big deal out of this very important phone call, whereas had there been females around that type of thing would probably go on in a more relaxed natural situation'.

The possibility of co-education is a subject of interest to the boys 'the boys ask for girls here, they make that type of comment to me all the time - why aren't there girls here'. The issue is apparently not for discussion: 'I brought that issue up. . .casually with a couple of Brothers and they preferred not to discuss the issue'. Indeed there is some evidence that the Brothers find difficulties in dealing not only with girls ("they just won't accept girls into their schools, that is quite contrary to their policies") but also with female staff. For instance 'while they

accept them as staff they believe that they are dealing on a professional basis and can keep them at arms length. I think you will find that some of the Brothers here would tell you that their conversations with women... have to be at arms length. That is part of the tradition'.

The issue of gender therefore is not one of the simple reproduction of traditional sexual attitudes of male authority, intelligence and strength against female weakness, stupidity and softness, for such attitudes are challenged by the obvious intelligence, capability and strength of several female members of staff. Moreover the pedagogy of most female and some male lay staff exemplifies the humanity and respect for persons that equates closely with the caring, loving religious ideal that the school proclaims. Gender, is, therefore, like religion, a focus for contestation and transformation rather than simply reproduction.

Control and C.B.C.

Historically control, like gender and religion and unlike class, has been a matter of reproduction rather than contestation and transformation. 'The Brothers. . .are authoritarian by nature and the nature of the order makes people that way. They have held the reins for so long and they are not going to have anyone else running their schools'. C.B.C. like other independent secondary schools, however, faces a number of external threats ranging from the "deprivatisation" potentially associated with the acceptance of ever increasing sums of government money; through the encroachment of newly established Catholic Education Offices with the concomitant standardisation of salary scales, appointment and promotion procedures and discretionary funding; to the rapid layicization of staff who may well become, as is increasingly the case in New South Wales, unionised. This issue of layicization is especially poignant 'As far as the Christian Brothers are concerned. . .their numbers

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are dwindling. If they wanted to maintain a Christian Brothers ethos in the school. . .they ought to have been more forceful about it. What is happening is the encroachment of the layman as opposed to the Christian Brothers and the lay persons influence in the school is becoming greater and greater without positive control by the Christians'.

As far as most teachers are concerned the Christian Brothers control centres on three areas: administration, discipline and curriculum. As far as administration is concerned the diminution in the size of the order has inevitably led to a retreat in the influence of the Brothers. Despite the magnitude of this retreat and the virtual collapse of the novitiate many argue that the traditions of the Christian Brothers schools are being maintained because 'by having a Christian Brother as a senior administrator it is seen that the Christian Brother is still in control of the school and it is still their school'.

This control is important in two ways. Firstly 'the Christian Brothers would say that they would maintain a better standard of education and discipline. . .the Brothers belong to that Irish code of discipline which subscribes to be very strict. Some of the lay teachers take a more relaxed view and perhaps a more human view of disciplinary problems and relationships with students'. As we saw in the discussion of gender, this is particularly, though not exclusively, true of the women staff. Whatever the case, however, things have changed a lot - as is indicated by a male staff member. 'In the years I was here as a student there were a lot more brothers here and the discipline was a lot harder than it is now. There was corporal punishment. . .just done very easily and without a second thought. I think a lot of parents knew that and actually expected that to happen if anything went wrong with their son. They expected the

Brothers to belt them and put them straight. . .Now all that has disappeared and you never hear of corporal punishment'. This latter is a slight exaggeration, for during our stay at the school "Brother Bash" lined up a number of miscreants in the gym and strapped them - after demanding that the female staff leave the scene of this public humiliation. However, the point stands that the "brutal discipline" traditionally associated with the Brothers has largely given way to other forms of control and negotiation.

The second claim for the Brothers part in providing a 'good catholic education' is that 'they have control of what happens in the school - what subjects are taught and so on'. This is on a certain limited sense, literally correct. For instance, from the staff's point of view 'the first we heard of (the introduction of) Italian was at a parent teacher session and we heard from the Principal that an Italian teacher had been employed'. The rationale for such decisions is often obscure to the staff as a whole who suggest that 'we rely very heavily on direction from the top. We really can't make any decisions. I mean we can make decisions but whether or not they are implemented or taken notice of is another thing'. The issue leads to ambivalence. On the one hand once decisions are made individual teacher autonomy is all but absolute. 'What I do in the classroom I am left to do on my own. There is no intrusion there'. Such autonomy is valued but it also leads to feelings of isolation and lack of co-ordination. One recently arrived staff member had this to say 'the only problem I see... is the lack of communication. You feel you are being neglected in a certain way but as for having authority over things you have got that'.

The most significant issue here is that related to the co-ordination of the curriculum. One senior staff member suggests that 'When I speak of the curriculum I speak about it as a totality of what is happening (but)

my discussion (at C.B.C.) is really on syllabus. There hasn't been enough discussion on curriculum. . .involving other people in the process. For 33 years we have spoken about curriculum when we really mean syllabus - syllabus and book learning. That is the way it started in Ireland. It was important that tables be taught and maths be taught and English be taught and certain narrow confines of knowledge be taught. But discipline was maintained. People did the right thing. They sat in rows and all that kind of thing. Surprisingly enough that still permeates a lot of the school and we haven't really got away from that'.

Control over administration, discipline and curriculum is, therefore, contested and in a process of transformation hastened by the growing layicization of the staff.

Conclusion

What this study seems to show then, is that the processes of reproduction, contestation and transformation act differentially both through time and with regard to the external context and internal processes of C.B.C. The value of ethnographic studies such as this is that they allow the empirical assessment of theoretical explanations which at certain levels of abstraction can be either naive or doctrinaire thus misrepresenting the lived experience of individuals and the nature of institutional and social life. What has been presented here is but a thumbnail sketch of the analysis we are currently undertaking. We believe, however, that ethnographies conceived and executed in this fashion can be a powerful aid to both theoretical and empirical analysis of fundamental social and educational processes such as those of reproduction, contestation and transformation.

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